



# SAN BENITO COUNTY FARM BUREAU

August 11, 2000

Mr. Steve Ritchie, Acting Executive Director  
Cal-Fed Bay-Delta Program  
1416 Ninth St., Suite 1155  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Final Programmatic EIS/EIR

Dear Mr. Ritchie:

Cal-Fed must recognize California farmland as a valuable environmental resource. The Cal-Fed plan would take nearly 250,000 acres out of production. Cal-Fed has not given enough thought to the environmental impact of this land conversion. The plan needs to look for ways to reduce the loss of farmland.

Cal-Fed should work with farmers on voluntary habitat conservation. That way, the land can help feed our growing population and provide habitat at the same time.

The Cal-Fed plan acknowledges it will have an "irreversible and irretrievable" impact on a lot a quarter-of-a-million acres of California farmland. Yet Cal-Fed offers no plan to replace this lost land, simply referring to farmland losses as "unavoidable."

But farmers can't provide habitat or feed people without reliable and affordable water. Cal-Fed must develop water storage with adequate yield. New storage will help guarantee water for the environment in dry years, so water won't have to be taken away from farms.

I think Cal-Fed should hold public hearings to explain its plans before they become final. Cal-Fed should tell us how its plan has changed and how it will affect people. Cal-Fed should not finalize its plan until citizens have adequate opportunity to review it and comment upon it.

Sincerely,

  
Robert Frusetta, Secretary

cc: Senator Dianne Feinstein  
Senator Barbara Boxer  
Rep. Sam Farr

Governor Gray Davis  
State Sen. Bruce McPherson  
Assembly Member Peter Frusetta

San Benito County Supervisors